



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP):**  
**FAMILY VIOLENCE APPELLATE PROJECT, LEGAL RESOURCE LIBRARY**  
**WEB DESIGNER/DEVELOPER**

**Summary of Request:**

Family Violence Appellate Project (“FVAP”) seeks to transform its website into a comprehensive, user-friendly Legal Resource Library (“Project”) for attorneys, advocates, and survivors of domestic violence and gender-based abuse. The database will consist of model briefs, motions and pleading templates, toolkits and tip sheets, legal resources, social science research, and trainings developed by FVAP. FVAP seeks proposals from vendors to build and develop this Legal Resource Library on FVAP’s existing WordPress website platform.

**Organizational Introduction:**

FVAP is a California and Washington state non-profit legal organization whose mission is to ensure the safety and well-being of survivors of domestic violence and other forms of intimate partner, family, and gender-based abuse by helping them obtain effective appellate representation. FVAP provides legal assistance to survivors of abuse at the appellate level through direct representation, collaborating with pro bono attorneys, advocating for survivors on important legal issues, and offering training and legal support for legal services providers and domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking counselors. FVAP is the California State Bar-funded Support Center with expertise in domestic violence law, family law, and appellate procedure.

By centering our work on the most marginalized survivors, including rural, immigrant, Native American, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA+ communities, FVAP works to transform the power of the civil legal system to support all survivors of abuse. A significant part of this work is ensuring survivors, especially those experiencing multiple oppressions, and the people who support them, have access to the legal information, resources and remedies they need to achieve justice.

### **History of FVAP’s website and Legal Resource Library:**

FVAP was founded in 2012, and launched its website ([www.fvaplaw.org](http://www.fvaplaw.org)) that year. The Legal Resource Library was launched in approximately 2016. FVAP’s website and Legal Resource Library is hosted on WordPress.

In 2021, the California Access to Justice Commission (“CA ATJ”) announced an RFP for the Legal Aid Infrastructure & Innovation Grants. FVAP applied to upgrade its Legal Resource Library, and was selected as a grantee in early 2022. This project is being funded by the CA ATJ grant.

### **Project Overview and Purpose:**

#### **The Need:**

FVAP relies extensively on thousands of documents (including social science and law review articles, legal briefs, case law, research memos, referral resources and sample motions) both for impact appellate litigation and to provide technical assistance and written resources to attorneys, advocates, and self-represented litigants. Currently, FVAP has numerous independent systems for storing these resources, creating significant barriers to accessing and maintaining the resources. Additionally, only a small portion of these legal resource documents are available to attorneys, advocates, and self-represented litigants on FVAP’s website. FVAP has not had the capacity to further develop and maintain a comprehensive Legal Resource Library for the public. As an example, FVAP has over 7,000 files containing social science and legal research information that is not currently available on its website. Furthermore, survey responses have shown that individuals searching FVAP’s website for resources find it “cumbersome” and difficult to locate materials. Access to these resources is critical for attorneys, advocates, and self-represented litigants.

#### **Goals and Outcomes:**

An easy-to-use, highly effective, up-to-date resource library will significantly increase access to self-help materials, advocate resources, sample briefs and other legal resources, and social science and law review articles targeted to the appropriate audience. The external outcomes will be:

1. Self-represented DV survivors in California and Washington will have better access to legal information and resources to help them with their cases (estimated 200,000+ people/year)
2. DV advocates in California and Washington will have better access to legal information and resources to help their survivor clients

3. Legal aid attorneys in California and Washington will have better access to sample briefs, research, and social science to help survivors in trial court
4. Legal aid attorneys nationwide will have better access to DV social science research and materials, as well as sample amicus briefs, to help survivors in trial or appellate courts

This technology-based infrastructure project will make a long-term impact on FVAP's capacity to organize, maintain, and locate its legal resources because it will centralize and store all materials in the Legal Resource Library. This new streamlined system will significantly increase access to these important materials, while simultaneously decreasing FVAP attorney time needed to maintain these materials. This will also increase FVAP attorney effectiveness in responding to technical assistance requests and strengthen responses to legal aid and pro bono attorneys.

Usage of the Legal Resource Library will be tracked, and contemporaneous surveys will demonstrate the effectiveness of the interface tool and the resources provided. By quickly sending automated text- or email-based surveys to those who access materials, FVAP will have timely feedback on how to make materials more helpful and to determine what additional materials are needed.

### **Project Description and Objectives:**

#### **The Project:**

FVAP will use grants funds to build a comprehensive, multi-purpose, web-based Legal Resource Library by transforming and optimizing its current website. FVAP will contract with a website engineering firm to build-out the "back-end" of FVAP's current website to develop a comprehensive Legal Resource Library. The website engineering firm will make the Legal Resource Library user-friendly by using prompts built with natural language processing (NLP) to easily guide users to the materials they need and by allowing users to conduct word searches. (Currently, FVAP's website hosts about 150 materials and only lists the names of resources – there is no ability to conduct word searches to find materials, nor are there NLP-generated prompts to guide users to resources.) Accessibility features, mobile access, and language access will be incorporated. Finally, the website engineering firm will enable an automated text- or email-based follow-up survey to users to gauge the effectiveness of the system and FVAP's materials, enabling FVAP to revise or create resources to be more responsive to the needs of users.

Grant funds will also be used to hire a temporary project manager to oversee the project, act as a liaison between FVAP and the website engineering firm, oversee the categorization of materials, and ensure grant objectives are met. Funds will also be used to contract with and compensate individuals who are legally trained, and/or have lived experience with using the types of materials to be included in the Legal Resource Library, to categorize existing materials.

**Audience:** Attorneys, advocates, and DV survivors in California state and Washington state, with the ability/infrastructure to expand the geographical reach over time.

**Key Technology and Requirements:**

**Wordpress:** FVAP’s current website is hosted on a Wordpress platform. FVAP has, after consulting with experts, decided to optimize this project to use advanced features of FVAP’s current Wordpress website platform, and has decided against approaches such as artificial intelligence or a custom-built database.

**Audience Customization and User Interface:** FVAP seeks to make resources available based on both subject matter and user identity. The Legal Resource Library should have an accessible, user-friendly interface that can direct users to the most relevant materials, including natural language processing. The Legal Resource Library should be accessible by computer, tablet, and mobile device. Ideally, the site would have a set of features that helps guide users to relevant content as well as an advanced search feature.

**Accessibility:** The Legal Resource Library should be available and accessible to disability communities (including people with vision, hearing and mobility impairments), non-English speaking communities, people without access to technology or internet, immigrant communities and traditions, and people lacking comfort with technology. The Legal Resource Library should follow FVAP’s accessibility guidelines whenever possible.

**Password Protection:** Currently, resources and videos are free for specific groups, and at a cost to others. All who visit the site must sign in for a password to access the site, and then must provide identifying information via Google form to access each resource. FVAP wants to continue to monitor who has access to, and who accesses, each resource, but is open to looking into different ways to do so (via password, sign-on, or other option). FVAP does want to streamline the process, to not require distinct sign-on for each individual resource.

For access to the site, FVAP would like to explore a “cleared list” where users’ email addresses or other user ID could be added to the cleared list and they would be able to enter the site by entering only their email address/user ID, without the need for a password. For access to each individual resource on the site, FVAP would like to be able to track each user’s clicks on each resource so we can identify who is accessing which resource, without requiring users to provide their information each time.

In addition to access to the general resources, FVAP would like to explore within the context of this Project the feasibility for levels of access to different information with differing access or password protection. For example, whether there could be general information, then information accessible only to FVAP staff.

**Analytics:** FVAP needs to be able to gauge user success by collecting certain data, including “clicks”, discrete visitors, downloads, which resources different types of users are accessing the most, and other information from those accessing the Legal Resource Library.

Automated Survey Feature: Enable an automated text- or email-based follow-up survey to users

### **Timeline of Project:**

FVAP has been awarded a yearlong grant to enable this project. The grant period started April 1, 2022, and runs until March 31, 2023.

Q1: Hire project manager; develop and send out RFP for website engineering firm; **hire website engineering firm**; identify and/or hire “categorization team”.

Q2 and Q3: Work with categorization team to categorize resources; **work with website engineering firm to develop Legal Resource Library infrastructure, natural language processing and search features, and automated survey function.**

Q4: **Launch** comprehensive Legal resource Library and implement an improved process for uploading new resources.

### **Budget for Project:**

Our maximum budget for this web designer contractor is \$45,000, and is set by the grant we received to implement this project. Payment will be made as milestones are met, as defined in “Timeline of Project”, and in “Elements of Proposal” and agreed upon by both parties. Proposals should be “total cost” bids.

Invoices should be timely upon completion of the milestone. Invoices will be reviewed by FVAP, and after approved, will be paid within thirty (30) days.

### **Elements of Proposal:**

1. Introduction/executive summary, *including project understanding, recommendations and objectives.*
2. Scope of work, *including description of work to be performed and list of deliverables and services.*
3. Detailed timeline based on FVAP’s needs enumerated in this RFP, *with realistic milestone goal dates.*
4. Project budget estimates and cost projections, *including breakdown of costs and expenses.*
5. Information as to who would be working on this project, and whether anyone working on this project from your company would be a subcontractor, vendor, or other non-employee. If so, please identify those people and the roles each person will play. *Please attach a resume/CV for each person to work on this project.*
6. Company profile, *including information highlighting company’s diversity, minority ownership, or equity and inclusion efforts.*

7. Two to three references (with phone and email contact) for other WordPress (advanced) web design and/or database creation or upgrade you have completed or are currently working on. *If you have not completed or started two to three on-point projects, please identify references where you have worked with WordPress and/or created or upgraded a database that you feel would be transferable.*

**Request for Additional Information:** FVAP reserves a right to request further information from anyone submitting a proposal, and to decline to review any proposal whether further information was sought but not produced within the stated timeframe.

### **Submission and Selection Process:**

#### **Timeline:**

- RFP sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2022
- Responses due: Tuesday, June 21, 2022
- Finalists selected and contacted: Wednesday, June 29, 2022
- Chosen contractor selected and contacted: Tuesday, July 12, 2022
- Project kick-off: As soon as feasible after selection, and based on milestones.
- Legal Resource Library Launch Target Date: February 1, 2023

#### **Selection Process:**

Responses will be accepted until 5 p.m. PST on Tuesday, June 21, 2022. Responses may be emailed to Monica LaBoskey, or uploaded to a Google Drive folder with link emailed to Monica LaBoskey (and all permissions granted to allow Monica LaBoskey to access and download the materials.)

All responses will be reviewed. If further information is requested, a request will be emailed with a deadline to respond. All complete responses, including any response to further request, will be evaluated. Finalists will be selected by 5 p.m. PST on Wed, June 29, 2022 by email. Finalists may be invited for a remote/virtual interview.

### **Contacts and Inquiries:**

All communications, submissions, questions or other contacts should be addressed by email to: Monica LaBoskey, [mlaboskey@fvaplaw.org](mailto:mlaboskey@fvaplaw.org)

FVAP contracted with a Project Manager to lead this project. That Project Manager's role, identity and contact information will be made known to the web designer chosen. Much of the communication throughout the project will be with the Project Manager.

### **Disclaimers:**

- Cost of preparing proposal: FVAP will not pay any costs associated with preparing proposals submitted in response to this RFP.

- FVAP will, to the extent reasonable and possible, keep all proposals confidential.
- FVAP reserves the right to cancel, amend, delay or reissue this RFP at any time.
- FVAP reserves the right to eliminate from consideration or not move forward with any web designer or proposal to this RFP that is unable to contract with FVAP at the time responses are due or the project is set to begin.
- The release of this RFP does not obligate FVAP to enter a contract.
- FVAP reserves the right to request further information from any web designer that submits a proposal to this RFP.
- FVAP reserves the right to enter into more than one contract as a result of this RFP.
- The selection of a web designer pursuant to this RFP does not constitute an endorsement of the web designer's services. The web designer shall not make any reference to FVAP in any website, literature, communication, promotional material, brochure, or other without FVAP's express written consent.
- Non-endorsement: FVAP's selection of a web developer pursuant to this RFP or otherwise does not constitute an endorsement of the vendor or its services.
- The selected web developer or any vendor submitting a response may not reference FVAP in any publication, materials, or the like without FVAP's express written consent.

**Ownership of Submissions, Final Product, IP:**

- Website, product, deliverables, data, and other shall be owned by FVAP, its successors and assigns.
- All intellectual property rights shall be owned by FVAP, its successors and assigns.
- All proposals submitted in response to this RFP, or in response to requests for more information in support of such proposal, shall become property of FVAP and will not be returned.
- The contractor chosen will be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement affirming the confidentiality of FVAP's content and other aspects of the project.